



The Old Ironsides Report



9 July 2003

912th Postal Company keeps mail moving to the troops

Spc. Anthony K. Reinoso, 372nd MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Read any soldier novel, watch any war movie, and more often than not there is some reference to a soldier receiving a letter or package from home. Whether it is good news or bad, soldiers look forward to seeing his or her name on a brown paper package or plain white envelope.

The 912th Postal Company, an Army Reserve unit from Orlando, Fla. is one of units at the Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) handling mail distribution for the 1st Armored Division.

The 912th have been in Iraq for just over 30 days and have been to three camps, Camp Virginia, Camp Pennsylvania in Kuwait and BIAP.

"It's been pretty tough. We haven't spent time in one place until we got to Camp Pennsylvania," said Capt. Steven King, company commander.

The postal unit followed the division in Kuwait and to Iraq, he said.

Before the postal company made its move to Iraq, 18 soldiers were assigned to keep the division's mail moving.

"Those eighteen [soldiers] did all of the 1 AD mail from BIAP for two weeks, while we got prepared to move out," King said. The division's soldiers continued receiving their mail without a pause, he said.

King recommends that unit's picking up mail at the post office "bring a staff or a team to help load [packages]. Because we are unloading it all day we do not have the resources to reload vehicles for pick up."

A common issue upon receiving a package is the condition in which they arrive.

"Make sure [the sender] gets some strong boxes," King said. "A lot of packages have been coming in crushed. It is not a matter of postal handling but a matter of weight. Boxes and bags of mail are stacked into [crates] that are trucked in to the postal units."

Family members, friends and support organizations should be aware of how best to avoid damage to products sent through the mail.

Senders should tape the tops and lids of containers carrying liquids, but also be aware that the hot climate in Iraq can cause canisters to rupture, he said.

Make sure to tape all edges of the box. The



Spc. Enrique Collazo (right), 912th Postal Co., Orlando, Fl., checks the contents of a box before it is mailed. Collazo's unit is currently assigned to Baghdad International Airport, Iraq, to support 1st Armored Division's mail operations.



Sgt. Jerome Patterson, 834th Postal Company, Miami, Fl., unloads packages from a truck at Baghdad International Airport, Iraq. Patterson's unit is attached to the 912th Postal Co.

corners can fray in time or under the weight of other packages. If sending products such as potato chips or candy try to avoid bagged containers as they can also burst under heat or weight pressure.

Getting the mail to the division's soldiers is the company's goal, King said.

"We do not mind working seven days a week. We know people are getting their mail because we know we are doing our job."



NEWS

Gunman Kills 5, Self at Miss. Factory

MERIDIAN, Miss. (AP) - A factory worker known as a racist who talked about murdering others opened fire with a shotgun and a rifle at a Lockheed Martin plant Tuesday, killing five people before fatally shooting himself. Dozens of employees at the aircraft parts plant frantically rushed for cover after the gunman started firing in the nation's deadliest workplace shooting in 2 1/2 years. As many as eight people were wounded, some critically.

Bush May Send U.S. Troops to Liberia

GOREE ISLAND, Senegal (AP) - American slavery was one of history's greatest crimes, President Bush said Tuesday at the very spot where hundreds of thousands of Africans were bought and sold like cargo. Embarking on a five-nation tour of Africa, Bush also edged toward sending U.S. troops to help end a three-year civil war in Liberia, a western African nation founded by freed American slaves.

Palestinian P.M. Abbas Threatens to Quit

JERUSALEM (AP) - Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas threatened to quit as prime minister and resigned from his top post in the Fatah movement Tuesday, reflecting a split within the main Palestinian political grouping over negotiations with Israel. Fatah has been thrown in turmoil with some members accusing Abbas of making too many concessions to Israel.

Iranian Twins Die After Operation Fails

SINGAPORE (Reuters) - Twin Iranian sisters joined at the head since birth 29 years ago died within hours of each other Tuesday after surgeons in Singapore separated them in an operation they knew could cost their lives.

The deaths of Laleh and Ladan Bijani from massive blood loss after a historic 52-hour operation plunged Iran into grief and brought tears to Singapore's Raffles Hospital, where the surgery took place.

Chaplain's thought for the day:

Leadership

William Wilberforce, popular leader in England from 1780-1833, died with the satisfaction that the emancipation bill for which he had expended so much of his time and energy would be passed. The end of slavery in the British Empire was assured.

Leadership is a God given privilege. There is no greater satisfaction than what comes from unselfishly seeking the physical and spiritual welfare of those entrusted to our care or supervision.

"To whom much is given, from him much will be required" (Luke 12:48).

BUSINESS

Spam Believed to Cost Businesses Billions

WASHINGTON (AP) - In addition to being annoying, e-mailed spam costs American businesses billions of dollars in lost time, productivity and e-business as it reduces consumer confidence in the Internet, officials told lawmakers Tuesday. "Consumers are getting inundated with pornographic or false and misleading e-mails that diminishes their faith in e-commerce, undermining many of the benefits," said Joseph Rubin of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

SPORTS

At 113, Cubs Fan Holds Out Hope

DIXON, Ill. (AP) -- Mary Crombie marked her 113th birthday with familiar optimism about her beloved Chicago Cubs, notwithstanding their 94-year unlucky streak.

Following baseball's lovable losers for so long, though, has taught her not to predict a World Series victory. That hasn't happened since 1908, the year she turned 18 and Chicago beat Detroit in the fall classic.

"I hope they do well," Crombie said Monday of this year's team.

The Cubs organization had even offered her a seat at a game for her birthday, but she couldn't go.

And in other news...

Britney Spears Says She's Not a Virgin

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Pop princess Britney Spears has admitted that she had sex with former boyfriend Justin Timberlake despite once vowing to remain a virgin until she wed.

In the upcoming issue of W magazine, Spears details her relationship with Timberlake.

"The most painful thing I have ever experienced was that breakup," Spears told W. "We were together so long and I had this vision. You think you're going to spend the rest of your life together."

The 21-year-old Spears, whose stratospheric rise from Mouseketeer to pop megastar mirrored Timberlake's success, revealed that she had sex with the 'N Sync boy band singer because she believed they would marry someday.

"I've only slept with one person my whole life," she said. "It was two years into my relationship with Justin, and I thought he was the one. But I was wrong!"

TODAY'S WEATHER

High: 115F /46C

Low: 82F/28C

